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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
10/765,714	01/27/2004	Benjamin A. Street	26.2.C99/USA	2571

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EXAMINER
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KOVACS, ARPAD F

ART UNIT	PAPER NUMBER
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3671

DATE MAILED: 05/11/2005

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

## Office Action Summary

Application No.

10/765,714

Applicant(s)

STREET ET AL.

Examiner

Árpád Fábián Kovács

Art Unit

3671

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

### Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If the period for reply specified above is less than thirty (30) days, a reply within the statutory minimum of thirty (30) days will be considered timely.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

### Status

- 1) ☒ Responsive to communication(s) filed on 29 April 2005.
- 2a) ☒ This action is **FINAL**. 2b) ☐ This action is non-final.
- 3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

### Disposition of Claims

- 4) ☒ Claim(s) 1-9, 11-20 and 25-28 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) \_\_\_\_\_ is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) ☐ Claim(s) \_\_\_\_\_ is/are allowed.
- 6) ☒ Claim(s) 1-9, 11-20 and 25-28 is/are rejected.
- 7) ☐ Claim(s) \_\_\_\_\_ is/are objected to.
- 8) ☐ Claim(s) \_\_\_\_\_ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

### Application Papers

- 9) ☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) ☐ The drawing(s) filed on \_\_\_\_\_ is/are: a) ☐ accepted or b) ☐ objected to by the Examiner.  
Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).  
Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).
- 11) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

### Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

- 12) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
- a) ☐ All b) ☐ Some \* c) ☐ None of:
- ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
  - ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. \_\_\_\_\_.
  - ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

\* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

### Attachment(s)

- 1) ☒ Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)
- 2) ☐ Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)
- 3) ☐ Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449 or PTO/SB/08)  
Paper No(s)/Mail Date \_\_\_\_\_.
- 4) ☐ Interview Summary (PTO-413)  
Paper No(s)/Mail Date. \_\_\_\_\_.
- 5) ☐ Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152)
- 6) ☐ Other: \_\_\_\_\_.

**DETAILED ACTION**

***Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 102***

1. The following is a quotation of the appropriate paragraphs of 35 U.S.C. 102 that form the basis for the rejections under this section made in this Office action:

A person shall be entitled to a patent unless –

(b) the invention was patented or described in a printed publication in this or a foreign country or in public use or on sale in this country, more than one year prior to the date of application for patent in the United States.

2. Claims 1-8, 25-26 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being anticipated by Hightower (4747174).

Hightower discloses a towing vehicle (1):

Claims 1, 25:

A brush rake or grooming attachment which is capable of smoothing loose, granular material, for example for achieving smooth surface (col. 1, ln 15), comprises:

A center brush having a hitch and pair of side brushes pivotally connected (col. 2, ln 23-24; fig 1, about hinge 13);

Brushes having flexible bristles (col. 2, ln 34-35);

Claim 1:

are the only portion of the brush rake that engage the loose granular material (fig 1);

claims 25-26 & 4-8:

the center brush engage the loose granular material with more down force than the brush bristles of the side brushes, due to the weight (i.e. heavier) of the drawbar/support beam ref 7, while the side edges are pivotable relative to the center / drawbar, as shown in fig 2, the support beam / drawbar rigidly fixing the center brush by at least one attachment member (fig 1, 2) & in comparing the size of the support beam in fig 2 is shorter than the center brush;

claim 2:

due to the flexible brush bristles being intertwined / at angle (see fig 2), the outer ends of the innermost ends of the side brushes & center brush groom an unbroken swath in a surface;

claim 3:

as shown in fig 2, each side brush is pivotally connected about a horizontal plane.

***Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103***

3. The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

(a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negated by the manner in which the invention was made.

4. Claims 9, 11-20, 27-28 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Hightower (4747174), in view of Shields II (6439444).

Hightower discloses the claimed device except for disclosing the vehicle of being a ZRT vehicle, the type of vehicle (ZRT) in recent years commonly used.

Shields discloses that it is known in the art to provide a ZRT vehicle as claimed in order to ensure maximum flexibility in the application of the ZRT vehicle. Although, there are plentiful ZRT vehicles known in the art, Examiner found that Shields provides additional feature of utilizing or applying the vehicle for other applications.

It would have been obvious to one having ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to pick and choose the type of vehicle utilized for grass/granular particle grooming of Hightower with the teachings of using or having a vehicle substantially zero radius turn capability of Shields, since in recent years it was known that ZRT vehicles are commonly used in lawn care, provide for lower cost and greater flexibility (for example in maneuvering) (Shields, col. 1, 11-24).

Art Unit: 3671

As applied to claim(s) 27-28, in view of the structure disclosed/taught by Hightower as modified by Shields, the method of operating/using the device would have been obvious since it is the normal and logical manner in which the device is used.

***Response to Arguments***

5. Applicant's arguments with respect to claims 1-9, 11-20, 25-28 have been considered but are moot in view of the new ground(s) of rejection.

***Conclusion***

6. The prior art made of record and not relied upon is considered pertinent to applicant's disclosure. Shannon et al., Bourgault et al., Kaufman, Shaw, Tozer, von Allwörden, Davis, Lewis et al., Gandrud et al., Rorgers, Allen, Anonsen, Freeman, Brook.

7. Applicant's amendment necessitated the new ground(s) of rejection presented in this Office action. Accordingly, **THIS ACTION IS MADE FINAL**. See MPEP § 706.07(a). Applicant is reminded of the extension of time policy as set forth in 37 CFR 1.136(a).

A shortened statutory period for reply to this final action is set to expire **THREE MONTHS** from the mailing date of this action. In the event a first reply is filed within **TWO MONTHS** of the mailing date of this final action and the advisory action is not mailed until after the end of the **THREE-MONTH** shortened statutory period, then the shortened statutory period will expire on the date the advisory action is mailed, and any extension fee pursuant to 37 CFR 1.136(a) will be calculated from the mailing date of the advisory action. In no event, however, will the statutory period for reply expire later than **SIX MONTHS** from the date of this final action.

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Árpád Fábíán Kovács whose telephone number is 571 272 6990. The examiner can normally be reached on Mo-Th.



Art Unit: 3671

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Thomas B. Will can be reached on 571 272 6998. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 703-872-9306.

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free).



Árpád Fábián Kovács  
Primary Examiner  
Art Unit 3671

ÁFK